

DAILY BULLETIN

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NEW U.S. OFFICIALS IN SUDAN WILL SUPPORT PEACE AGREEMENT

United States strongly backs African Union in Darfur, Boucher says

The United States is stepping up support of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said in a statement February 25.

The department has appointed several officials to engage the government on critical issues, including the crisis in Darfur, and to address the humanitarian situation there, he said.

Following is the text of the statement:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
February 25, 2005

U.S. Actions to Support Sudan Peace Process

The United States is taking several actions to support the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan. This agreement provides a sound basis for achieving stability and national unity throughout Sudan, particularly with respect to Darfur and other areas still affected by conflict. The United States urges both sides to implement the Agreement fully and rapidly, and to seize this opportunity to resolve the crisis in Darfur.

We have strengthened our diplomatic presence by appointing Ambassador David Kaeuper as Chargé

d'Affaires of the American Embassy in Khartoum. Ambassador Kaeuper has arrived in the Sudanese capital and will engage the Sudanese government on critical issues including the crisis in Darfur, implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and delivering life-saving humanitarian aid to millions of Sudanese threatened by displacement and food shortages. The Embassy has also sent an official to Southern Sudan with a view to establishing a U.S. diplomatic presence there.

The United States has named former Ambassador to Sudan Donald Petterson as its representative to the Abyei Commission, which will resolve border issues in the Abyei region, and which was the subject of one of the protocols constituting the Comprehensive Peace Accord. In addition, we plan to name a senior official to the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, which will be established to monitor and report on implementation of the Agreement. We urge the parties to establish this and the other Commissions called for in the Agreement as quickly as possible.

The United States is committed to working closely with the international community to provide assistance and to promote peace, security and reconciliation in Sudan. We take this opportunity to underscore our grave concerns about the violence and atrocities in Darfur. Darfur remains a major priority, and the United States will continue its strong support for the African Union mission in Darfur. The United States will not fully normalize relations with Sudan until the situation in Darfur is stabilized.

RICE TO ATTEND INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON SUPPORTING PALESTINIANS

Conference scheduled for March 1 in London

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will participate in an international conference in London March 1 aimed at supporting the Palestinian Authority.

Thirty delegations are expected at the conference, where the secretary will work with key officials in joint efforts to support Palestinian political institutions, build security and invigorate the Palestinian economy, a statement issued by State Department spokesman Richard Boucher February 25 said.

Following is the text of Boucher's statement:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
February 25, 2005

Secretary Rice Travel to Attend the London Meeting on Supporting the Palestinian Authority

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will travel to London, UK, on Monday, February 28, for the March 1 London Meeting on Supporting the Palestinian Authority. Secretary Rice looks forward to working with key officials there on our joint efforts to support Palestinian political institutions, to build security, and to invigorate the Palestinian economy. The meeting in London will include 30 delegations, including a number of Arab states and other members of the international donor community who will come together to express their support for the new Palestinian leadership. Secretary Rice also will participate in a Quartet meeting, bilateral discussions with the British, and other meetings while in London, before returning to Washington, D.C. on Wednesday.

FORMER PRESIDENTS' VISIT TO TSUNAMI-AFFECTED COUNTRIES A SUCCESS

Officials report more than \$1 billion in U.S. private-sector donations

By Stephen Kaufman

Washington File White House Correspondent

Washington -- Bush administration officials described the visit of former presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton to four countries affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami as "a tremendous success."

Speaking at the Washington Foreign Press Center February 25, Karin Torgerson, special assistant to the president and deputy director of USA Freedom Corps, said the February 19-21 trip to Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives accomplished three main purposes in connection with the Bush and Clinton joint effort to raise private funds to help the victims.

She said the trip provided an opportunity for the two former presidents to learn more about the needs in the

region as a way of aiding them in their efforts to encourage additional donations. Secondly, it gave them the opportunity to build and sustain good will in the region on behalf of the United States.

Finally, the trip helped to focus the world's attention on the continuing needs in the region. "On each of these fronts, the trip was a tremendous success," Torgerson said.

She also announced that U.S. private sector donations for tsunami relief and reconstruction are estimated to have topped \$1 billion.

Of that sum, \$290 million came from U.S. corporations and foundations. Torgerson added that the actual figures might be much higher, since 43 charities have not yet reported the funds that they have received.

The Bush administration has also pledged \$950 million to support the rehabilitation and reconstruction of areas devastated by the tsunami, as well as to cover the costs of U.S. government relief efforts, according to a February 9 fact sheet released by the White House.

Ambassador Douglas Hartwick, the State Department's senior coordinator of the Tsunami Reconstruction Task Force, described the visit by the former presidents as "moving testimony to the fact that America cares deeply about the people affected by this tragedy."

"[My] impression was that the unique nature of the two former presidents coming together and traveling around this affected region is something that is most unusual, and I think everyone from the various presidents and prime ministers that we met with acknowledged that fact," he said.

During the visit to the four countries, Hartwick said Bush and Clinton met with local inhabitants and survivors, and witnessed reconstruction efforts such as rebuilding and infrastructure projects. They also met with government leaders to discuss cooperation in relief activities and needs assessments, and in ensuring that assistance is used as intended.

Deputy Director Torgerson said even though some of the children did not know who the former presidents were, they were nevertheless excited by the visit. "... and in some ways that actually gave it more attention because it was just a sense of joy [and] a sense of survival."

The two former presidents gave interviews to the American media, using those opportunities to show their fellow citizens drawings by Thai children inspired by the disaster. Hartwick said those presentations "captured the moment, the whole point of this presidential mission, which was to try to help these people recover as quickly as possible."

Hartwick said the immediate relief and some recovery efforts are now "behind us," with needs now shifting toward reconstruction. "This is something that will be done over the next two, three, four years [and] not the next two, three, four months," he said.

With longer-term aid expected, he called for practices and procedures to be put in place in order to prevent or minimize the possibility of corruption or diversion of aid money.

Hartwick also said the United States "fully recognize[s] that the affected countries themselves are responsible for determining their own recovery needs," and it will help to ensure that assistance "is targeted where it is needed most and [that] this assistance is distributed in a fair and transparent nature."

Torgerson also reported that former President Clinton will begin serving as the United Nations special envoy for tsunami aid on March 1.

UNITED STATES FUNDS ROCKET FUEL DISPOSAL PROJECT IN ARMENIA

Project will neutralize rocket fuel component, produce fertilizer byproduct

Washington -- The United States will contribute over \$1 million toward a project of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to eliminate rocket fuel component stocks in Armenia, according to the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan.

These rocket fuel components, known as melange, are often kept in inadequate containers that present considerable environmental risk in addition to the inherent security risk, the U.S. Embassy said. These types of stocks

are found in other states of the former Soviet Union, as well as in Armenia.

The OSCE said that in response to a request from Armenia in April 2004 for technical and financial support for the recycling of 872 tons of melange, the OSCE Office in Yerevan arranged for international experts to advise on the environmentally sound recycling of the chemicals.

The method of neutralizing the melange chosen by the OSCE will result in the added positive byproduct of a liquid fertilizer for use by Armenia's farmers.

The U.S. Embassy said the United States is the primary source of funds for this project, accounting for nearly 75 percent of the budget. Other countries such as Germany, Finland and Canada have also contributed -- particularly to the project's crucial initial phases, which were completed in 2004.

On February 22, a memorandum of understanding on the elimination of the rocket-fuel-component stocks was signed by Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin, the head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, and Serzh Sargssian, the minister of defense of Armenia and secretary of the National Security Council.

"The Office will continue to support this important activity, which aims to improve both the environment and the security of the Armenian population," said Ambassador Pryakhin.

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